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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/788,365	02/21/2001	Tuqiang Ni	015290-517	3359

7590 03/09/2005  
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EXAMINER	
ZERVIGON, RUDY	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1763	

DATE MAILED: 03/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/788,365

Applicant(s)

NI ET AL.

Examiner

Rudy Zervigon

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 25 and 28-45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 25 and 28-45 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on January 3, 2005 and February 22, 2005 has been entered.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claims 25, 29, 33, 34, 37, 38, 42, and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishii (USPat. 5,685,942) in view of Li et al (USPat. 5,772,771) and Horie, Kuniaki et al (US 6,132,512 A).

Ishii teaches a conductor gas injector (85, Figure 4) supplying process gas into a plasma processing chamber (82; column 7, line 63 - column 8, line 22) wherein a semiconductor substrate ("W") is subject to plasma processing (column 3, lines 28-50). The gas injector further comprises a gas injector body (85, Figure 4) sized to extend through a chamber wall (83) of the processing chamber. As shown in Figure 4, the axial planar distal end surface (surface containing ports 87) of the gas injector body is exposed within the processing chamber. Figure 4 shows that

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the gas injector body includes a plurality of gas outlets (87) adapted to supply process gas into the processing chamber.

Ishii teaches alternative materials to conductive, non-dielectric, electrodes which are dielectric semiconductors such as the same materials as that of the processed semiconductor ("quartz") wafer (column 4; lines 43-51).

Figure 4 shows that the gas outlets of the gas injector body (85, Figure 4) are located at an axial end surface (surface containing ports 87) of the gas injector body. The gas outlets further including wherein the gas outlets are located are located in the axial distal end surface of the gas injector body.

Ishii further teaches that the gas injector includes a planar axial end surface (surface containing ports 87; Figure 4) that is flush with an interior surface of a dielectric window (83; "insulating material"; column 8, line 7) forming a chamber wall. Ishii also teaches a surface (flange portion of 85, Figure 4) adapted to overlie an outer surface of the chamber wall.

Ishii does not teach gas outlets further including a plurality of angled gas outlets extending at an acute angle to the axial direction. Ishii further does not teach a pressure difference across his gas injector (85, Figure 4) orifice sustaining gas velocities in excess of sonic gas velocities.

Ishii does not teach a dielectric gas injector body (85, Figure 4).

Li teaches a gas injector (Figure 1A) supplying process gas into a plasma processing chamber (18; column 3, lines 20-47). The gas injector further comprises a gas injector body (56a/64, Figure 1) sized to extend through a chamber wall (25) of the processing chamber.

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As shown in Figure 1/1A, the distal end (64) of the gas injector body is exposed within the processing chamber. Figure 1A shows that the gas injector body includes three angled gas outlets (64) adapted to supply process gas into the processing chamber. Figures 1 and 1A shows that the gas outlets (64, Figure 1,1A) of the gas injector body (56, Figure 1) are located at an axial end surface (56) of the gas injector body. Specifically, Li teaches a plurality (3) of angled gas outlets (Figure 1A) extending at an acute angle to the axial direction. Li does not teach 8 angled gas outlets as claimed by claim 43. Li does not teach the acute angle of the gas injector as being between 10° to 70°.

Kuniaki teaches a gas passage (63; Figure 18a,b) within a gas distribution plate (64; Figure 18a) where, depending on the pressure difference ( $P_1 - P_2$ ; column 16; lines 35-40) across Kuniaki's gas passage, gas velocities can be controlled.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Ishii to optimize the angle of a plurality of his gas outlets, add additional gas outlets as taught by Li, optimize the pressure processing conditions of the Ishii apparatus to produce gas velocities in excess of subsonic gas velocities, and use alternate conductor materials for Ishii's conductor gas injector.

Motivation for Ishii to optimize the angle of a plurality of his gas outlets, add additional gas outlets as taught by Li, optimize the pressure processing conditions of the Ishii apparatus to produce gas velocities in excess of subsonic gas velocities, and use alternate conductor materials for Ishii's conductor gas injector as taught by Li is to process larger area substrates (column 5, lines 19-28), further to optimize the pressure processing conditions of the Ishii apparatus to produce gas velocities in excess of subsonic gas velocities is to process larger area substrates

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(column 5, lines 19-28), further, motivation to use dielectric electrodes is for preventing metallic contamination as taught by Ishii (column 4; lines 43-51). Further, it is considered obvious to optimize the operation of the claimed apparatus claims respectively. Further, it is well established that the duplication of parts is obvious (*In re Harza*, 274 F.2d 669, 124 USPQ 378 (CCPA 1960) MPEP 2144.04). With respect to the processing gas velocities and pressure operating conditions, it has been held that claim language that simply specifies an intended use or field of use for the invention generally will not limit the scope of a claim (*Walter*, 618 F.2d at 769, 205 USPQ at 409; MPEP 2106). Additionally, in apparatus claims, intended use must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim (*In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967); *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963); MPEP 2111.02). Alternatively, it would be obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art to optimize the operation of the claimed invention (*In re Boesch*, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980); *In re Hoeschele*, 406 F.2d 1403, 160 USPQ 809 (CCPA 1969); *Merck & Co. Inc. v. Biocraft Laboratories Inc.*, 874 F.2d 804, 10 USPQ2d 1843 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 493 U.S. 975 (1989); *In re Kulling*, 897 F.2d 1147, 14 USPQ2d 1056 (Fed. Cir. 1990), MPEP 2144.05).

4. Claims 28, 30-32, 35, 36, 39, 40, 43, and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Ishii (USPat. 5,685,942) and Li et al (USPat. 5,772,771), in view of Rossman et al (USPat. 6,077,357) and Horie, Kuniaki et al (US 6,132,512 A).

Ishii, Li, and Horie are discussed above. Ishii further teaches Ishii's injector body (85, Figure 4) has a cylindrical bore (88a; Figure 4) adapted to supply gas to Ishii's gas outlets (87), the

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cylindrical bore being defined by an endwall (top surface of 86; Figure 4). Ishii further teaches a center gas outlet (86) extending from the endwall (top surface of 86; Figure 4). Ishii, Li, and Horie do not teach a first O-ring seal in a surface of the flange for sealing against the outer surface of the chamber wall. Ishii and Li do not teach a second O-ring seal on an outer surface of the gas injector body. Ishii and Li further do not teach a gas injector for supplying process gas at sonic velocity. Ishii, Li, and Horie do not teach that Ishii's injector body (85, Figure 4) has a cylindrical bore adapted to supply gas to the gas outlets, the cylindrical bore being defined by a sidewall and an endwall.

Rossman teaches a gas injection nozzle (302; Figure 14) including a first O-ring seal (326) in a surface of the flange for sealing against the outer surface of the chamber wall (314). Rossman further teaches a second O-ring seal (322, 324; Figure 14) on an outer surface of the gas injector body.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add an O-ring seal in a surface of the flange for sealing against the outer surface of the chamber wall and to add a second O-ring seal on an outer surface of Ishii's gas injector body, further to optimize the pressure processing conditions of the Ishii apparatus to produce gas velocities in excess of sonic gas velocities, inclusive, for Ishii to have a central bore (88a) which is partly defined at one end at a sidewall.

Motivation to add an O-ring seal in a surface of the flange for sealing against the outer surface of the chamber wall and to add a second O-ring seal on an outer surface of Ishii's gas injector body, and to flow the process gas at sonic velocity as taught by Rossman is to provide for vacuum integrity as taught by Rossman (column 17, lines 54-56), inclusive, motivation for Ishii to have a

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central bore (88a) which is partly defined at one end at a sidewall is for providing an alternate and equivalent entry point for Ishii's process gasses.

With respect to the processing gas velocities and pressure operating conditions, it has been held that claim language that simply specifies an intended use or field of use for the invention generally will not limit the scope of a claim (Walter , 618 F.2d at 769, 205 USPQ at 409; MPEP 2106). Additionally, in apparatus claims, intended use must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim (In re Casey, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967); In re Otto , 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963); MPEP 2111.02). Alternatively, it would be obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art to optimize the operation of the claimed invention (In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980); In re Hoeschele , 406 F.2d 1403, 160 USPQ 809 (CCPA 1969); Merck & Co. Inc . v. Biocraft Laboratories Inc. , 874 F.2d 804, 10 USPQ2d 1843 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied , 493 U.S. 975 (1989); In re Kulling , 897 F.2d 1147, 14 USPQ2d 1056 (Fed. Cir. 1990), MPEP 2144.05).

5. Claim 41 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishii (USPat. 5,685,942) and Li et al (USPat. 5,772,771) in view of Kawase et al (USPat. 5,734,143) and Horie, Kuniaki et al (US 6,132,512 A). Ishii and Li are discussed above. Ishii further teach his gas injector (85; Figure 4) including a uniform diameter central bore (88a) extending axially from an upper axial end face (top surface 85) of the gas injector body, the central bore being defined by a cylindrical sidewall and a flat endwall (bottom surface 85).

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Ishii and Li do not teach that the inlets of the gas outlets (87) are located on the flat endwall. Ishii and Li do not teach a pressure difference across Ishii's and Li's gas injector orifice sustaining gas velocities in excess of sonic gas velocities.

Kuniaki teaches a gas passage (63; Figure 18a,b) within a gas distribution plate (64; Figure 18a) where, depending on the pressure difference ( $P_1 - P_2$ ; column 16; lines 35-40) across Kuniaki's gas passage, gas velocities can be controlled.

Kawase teaches a plasma torch head nozzle (Figure 2; column 5, line 66 – column 3, line 31). Inclusive, Kawase teaches a gas injector (Figure 2) including a uniform diameter central bore (along axis 70) extending axially from an upper axial end face (top of 11) of the gas injector body, the central bore being defined by a cylindrical sidewall and a flat endwall (bottom of 11) where the inlets of the gas outlets (10) are located on the flat endwall.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace Ishii's injector body with Kawase's injector body, further to optimize the pressure processing conditions of the Ishii apparatus to produce gas velocities in excess of sonic gas velocities.

Motivation to replace Ishii's injector body with Kawase's injector body is to form stable plasmas as taught by Kawase (column 2, lines 10-15), further to optimize the pressure processing conditions of the Ishii apparatus to produce gas velocities in excess of sonic gas velocities is to optimize the operation of the claimed apparatus claims respectively. With respect to the processing gas velocities and pressure operating conditions, it has been held that claim language that simply specifies an intended use or field of use for the invention generally will not limit the scope of a claim (Walter , 618 F.2d at 769, 205 USPQ at 409; MPEP 2106). Additionally, in

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apparatus claims, intended use must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim (In re Casey, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967); In re Otto, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963); MPEP2111.02). Alternatively, it would be obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art to optimize the operation of the claimed invention (In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980); In re Hoeschele, 406 F.2d 1403, 160 USPQ 809 (CCPA 1969); Merck & Co. Inc. v. Biocraft Laboratories Inc., 874 F.2d 804, 10 USPQ2d 1843 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 493 U.S. 975 (1989); In re Kulling, 897 F.2d 1147, 14 USPQ2d 1056 (Fed. Cir. 1990), MPEP 2144.05).

### ***Response to Arguments***

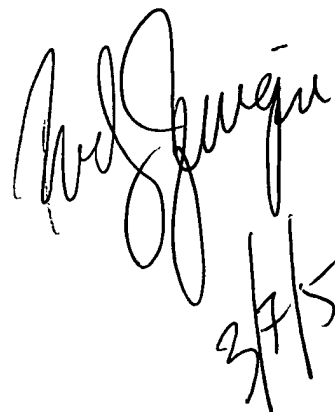
6. Applicant's arguments with respect to amendend claims 25, 39, 41, and 42 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection. The response to Applicant's arguments are directed to the above new grounds of rejection as necessitated by Applicant's amendments.

### ***Conclusion***

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Rudy Zervigon whose telephone number is (571) 272.1442. The examiner can normally be reached on a Monday through Thursday schedule from 8am through 7pm. The official fax phone number for the 1763 art unit is (703) 872-9306. Any Inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be

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directed to the Chemical and Materials Engineering art unit receptionist at (571) 272-1700. If the examiner can not be reached please contact the examiner's supervisor, Parviz Hassanzadeh, at (571) 272-1435.



Handwritten signature of Parviz Hassanzadeh, dated 3/7/5.